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CROW'S NEST RAILWAY QUESTION

**Opinions
of the
Canadian
Press**

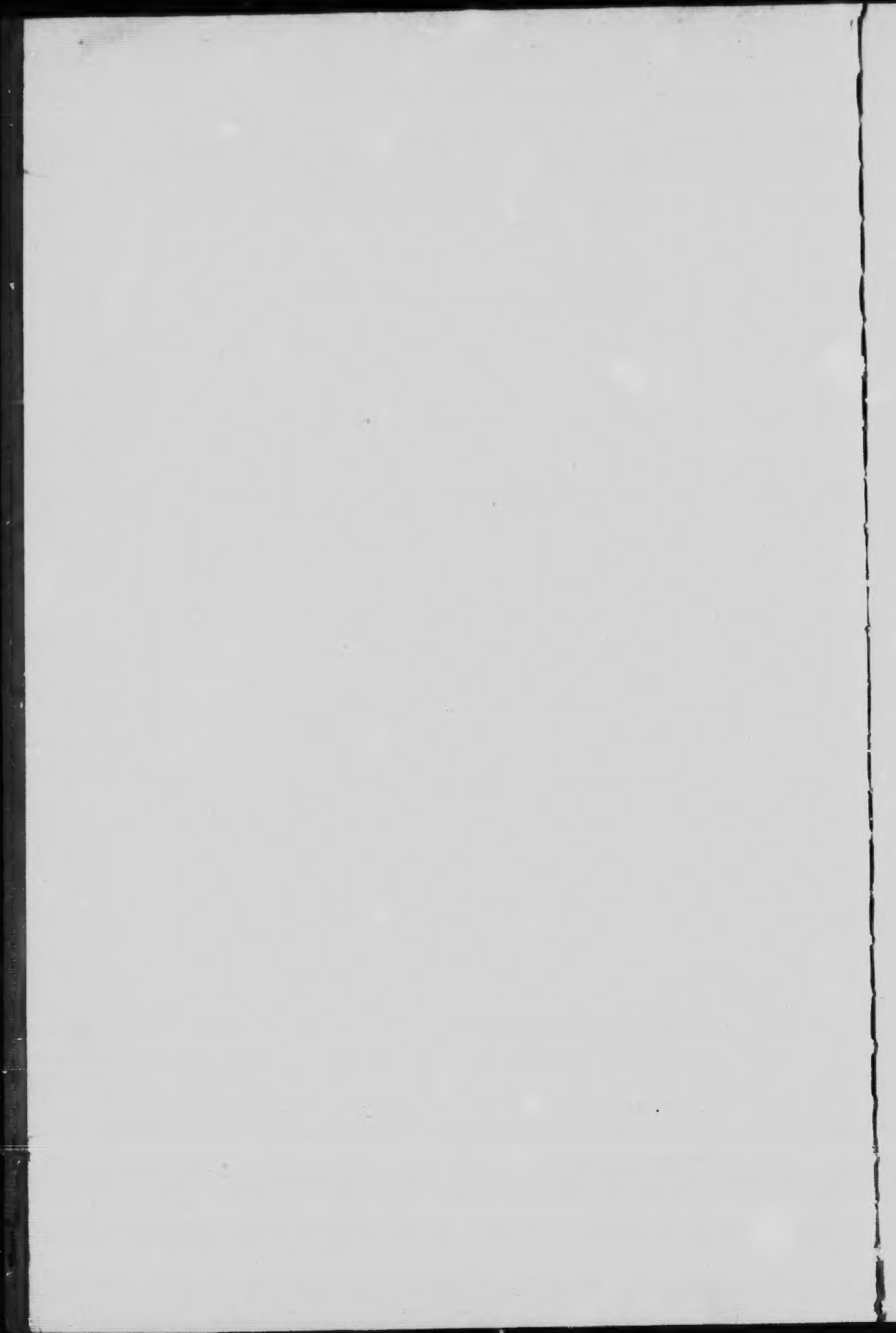
Vancouver World
Sandon Paystreak
Ferne Free Press
Greenwood Miner
Hamilton Herald
Toronto Globe
Toronto World
Belleville
Intelligencer
Ottawa Journal
Montreal Witness
Quebec Chronicle

RUNNING GRIST OF CLIPPINGS

CROW'S NEST PASS COAL AND COKE DEVELOPMENT

**NEED OF A DIRECT CONNECTION WITH
THE AMERICAN MARKET**

OPINIONS OF THE CANADIAN PRESS



PRESS OPINIONS

ON THE PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM THE CROW'S NEST PASS COAL AREAS TO THE AMERICAN BOUNDARY

VANCOUVER WORLD.

As we have already stated, the coal-bearing area on the line of this branch of the C.P.R. is extensive. The Government of Canada owns 50,000 acres thereof; the C. P. R. and the Cox-Jaffray syndicate fully 200,000 acres. The 10,000 acres, upon a portion of which the Cox-Jaffray company is at present operating, does not, and never did, form any portion of the land grant to the British Columbia Southern. The original purchasers of this tract secured the land prior to the granting of the charter to that company in 1888. Colonels Baker and Prior, and other well-known British Columbians of that period, were in the deal, but so many were the obstacles they had to contend with that hopefulness began to give place to utter despondency, and those who knew the ups and downs Colonel Baker had to contend with, and the vast sums of money he had to expend in connection with the matter, often wondered how he was able to withstand the enormous strains he had to endure. Not until it became evident that the building of the Crow's Nest Pass line was to be undertaken did he succeed in inducing outsiders to join him in developing a property which he knew to be of immense value. He had faith in the property, as well

as a strong belief that coal in inexhaustible quantities existed in the section of the country in which he was so largely interested. Messrs. Cox, Jaffray and the others who joined him in forming the Crow's Nest Coal Company, began to develop their property—that is, the tract which was bought prior to the building of the line of railway, and with such results that already the output is close upon 1,000 tons of coal and several hundred tons of coke per day. The expenditure of capital made before any returns began to come in amounted to a sum of considerably over \$1,500,000. At present no fewer than six hundred coke ovens are in operation. Employment is given to a large number of miners, and that section of the Province has an appearance of bustle and activity not to be generally observed elsewhere.

**No need of
alarm.**

There is unnecessary alarm in some portions of the interior at the proposal of James J. Hill, of the Great Northern Railway, to effect an entrance for his system to the Crow's Nest coal fields. Already the Great Northern System reaches Lethbridge, where there are coal-bearing areas. Mr. Hill operates a narrow-gauge line from the main line of the Great Northern at Shelby to Lethbridge, and running powers for any other line of railway having been made a condition by the Government to the granting of the charter to the C.P.R., it would seem as if Mr. Hill had but to alter his narrow-gauge to a standard gauge to enable him to run cars, freight as well as passenger, to Kootenay Lake, Nelson or Rossland. But he is anxious to get a more direct route to the Crow's Nest coal fields than by the routes we have named. In the interior there is opposition to Mr. Hill's proposal, but there being untold millions of tons of coal lying hidden in the bosom of mother earth, many hold that those opposing the development of this exceedingly desirable industry are acting the part of dogs in the manger in throwing any barriers in the way of schemes which would be the means of introducing capital and population wherewith to give an impetus to a business the possibilities of which are simply illimitable. The coal is there. Then why, in the name of all that is reasonable, should it not be converted

into sources which would yield great wealth to the Province, the Canadian Pacific Railway and other transportation organizations, as well as further development of the mining and smelting industries of the interior? There is no dearth of coal in British Columbia. The whole trouble has been to get abundance of capital and labor wherewith to utilize what nature has bestowed upon us so lavishly.

SAN DON PAPER BREAK.

The developments of the last few days with regard to the Crow's Nest coal fields Great Northern charter are startling. The C. P. R. has fitted up the finest line of sympathy producers ever sprung on a gullible public. The Kettle River drama is being re-enacted on a larger scale. Newspapers, boards of trade, politicians and public men of all grades are being pressed into the service, and all are busy manufacturing sentiment against Jim Hill and his proposed railway. The argument is along the usual lines—loyalty and patriotism. Canada for the Canadian Pacific. Hill, Morgan and Rockefeller must be kept out of Canada. They will hobble this country with the shackles of monopoly and take away our coal. Incidentally they may inconvenience the nice little monopoly now held by the C. P. R. These alien monopolists, so we are told, should be kept on the United States side of the line. Otherwise the Crow's Nest Coal Company will ship its product to the American smelters over the Great Northern, and the C. P. R. will not get a dollar out of the traffic.

The Question Confronting Canada. Now, the question that confronts Canada is how to sell these people all the coal they want and still keep the smelter business at home.

The coal is certainly of no value in the ground, and until it is dug up and shipped the country realizes nothing on it. In other words, it is not the coal, but the labor, that counts. If 10,000 men, instead of 900, can be put to work in the Crow's Nest, so much the better for B. C. It is immaterial to British Columbia where the coal goes to, so long as it is paid

for. It would be just as reasonable to ask Nanaimo or Cape Breton collieries to refuse to sell to United States as to ask the Crow's Nest Pass Company to do the same. The company is now producing 1,200 tons a day, but there is no reason why it should not produce 10,000 or 20,000 tons a day—or for the matter of that, 100,000. Its capabilities are unlimited. The labor required for this production must directly benefit Canada. The coal fields can not be moved across the line. If the Canadian smelters did not get their fair share of the coal mined the Government always has the privilege of curtailing exportation until they do. So much for the coal company.

FERNIE FREE PRESS.

Every man and boy in Fernie is laughing at the scare talk about coal being drained away by the proposed connection with the Great Northern. We have here 250,000 acres, carrying seams that aggregate 150 feet. Cut it down 200,000 acres with 100 feet of coal seams, and we have 20,000,000,000 tons of coal. If we swell our output to 10,000 tons a day, we will exhaust this supply in the year of grace 8500. Long before that date the men who are trying to prevent the building of railways in British Columbia will have no need of coal.

GREENWOOD MINER.

Just now the newspapers of British Columbia are much exorcised over the possibility of Jim Hill getting control of the coal beds of East Kootenay, with the result that the coal and coke output of the district will be diverted to the United States, and our smelters be compelled to buy fuel elsewhere. It appears that Jim Hill is applying to the Dominion House for a charter to extend his lines into Canadian territory. These extensions would enter in competition with the C. P. R., and as a large majority of the people favor railway competition, it would not be policy for the papers under the control of the

C. P. R. to advance this argument, so they have started the cry that the ultimate result of the extension of Jim Hill's system into Canadian territory will be to shut down the smelters now in operation, owing to the fact that the coal and coke output of Canada will be diverted to the United States. There is very little danger of the smelters of Yale and Kootenay having to shut down on account of scarcity of fuel; at all events, the people are quite willing to exchange a few million tons of coal and coke for the privilege of competing railway lines.

HAMILTON HERALD.

Those who, in the interest of the C. P. R., are opposing the granting of a charter for the proposed railway from the Crow's Nest coal fields to the international boundary, base their opposition chiefly upon the alleged danger to the Canadian smelting industry if the line were built. They assert that the object of the promoters of the railway is to ship coal to the States, and that if that were done, there would not be enough coal and coke to supply the domestic demand: hence British Columbia interests would suffer.

It is doubtful if any of those who raise this objection believe that it is a valid one. Weak as it is, it is the most plausible one that can at present be thought of. Even if there were danger of a temporary shortage in the British Columbia coal supply, that would not be a good reason for withholding a charter for a railway for which not a cent of public money nor an acre of public land is asked. The railway would be a good thing in itself. If by its construction the domestic coal supply were threatened, other means could be adopted to avert that danger.

But the cry about the danger to the British Columbia smelting interests is mere poppycock. If the facts and figures cited by President Cox, of the Crow's Nest Coal Company, at the annual meeting, held a day or two ago, are even approximately correct, they serve to reveal the absurdity of the statements made, and the alarmist feeling raised by those who oppose the railway.

**Boundless
Store of
Coal.**

Mr. Cox pointed out that British Columbia's present demand for coal and coke is about 1,000 tons a day; that the company is now making large expenditures to increase its output, which will be 4,500 tons a day within a year, and 6,000 tons within three years; that it has been estimated by practical geologists that the coal area from which the supply is drawn contains twenty thousand millions of tons, or sufficient to admit of an output of 10,000 tons a day for six thousand years.

Even allowing a wide margin for exaggeration, it does not appear from these figures that there is any immediate danger of a coal or coke famine in British Columbia, by reason of the exportation of Crow's Nest coal across the line.

The *Herald* favored the construction of the Kettle River Valley Railway, and considered that the refusal of a charter to the company which proposed to build that line was a great blunder. From the first we have advocated the granting of a charter for the proposed line from the Crow's Nest coal region to the boundary, and we think that Parliament would again commit a blunder by refusing to grant the charter.

TORONTO GLOBE.

The vote of the Associated Boards of Trade of eastern British Columbia, endorsing free trade in railways, shows a great preponderance of opinion in favor of commercial connections with the adjacent States, such as exist in the eastern provinces. The meeting was held at Greenwood, where the smelting industry has been recently developed, and the delegates represented every Board of Trade in British Columbia, with the exception of the coast cities. It may be regarded as accurately reflecting the opinions and sentiments of the commercial, mining, smelting and industrial interests of the Province, and the vote of 33 to 5 shows a thorough appreciation of the value of free railway communication and a full assurance that no disastrous results will follow a liberal railway policy. The resolution adopted was very definite, and bound the association to

petition the Dominion Parliament and the Provincial Legislature to grant the charter applied for by the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, and also the charters applied for by other companies who asked for nothing beyond the privilege of constructing railways in the Province. This is a sound position, for the willingness of investors to build railways at their own expense and without subsidies or other favors is the best possible evidence that such railways are needed for the development of the country. The men who embark in railway enterprises are the best judges of the needs of the country, so far as the railway service is concerned, and their willingness to invest their own money is proof of the sincerity of their convictions. When the Kettle River Valley Railway charter was refused by the Dominion Parliament considerable hard feeling was naturally aroused in the locality affected. If western members should prevent by their votes in a Parliamentary Committee the building of a railway in Ontario, Quebec or the Maritime Provinces, they would provoke a storm of criticism and condemnation from the districts directly interested, and their course would not tend to promote the solidarity of the Dominion. It would be looked upon as an unwarranted interference in a matter that concerned them in a very remote degree, and would be condemned as the adoption of a policy which would tend to discourage enterprise and prevent development.

Evils of Obstruction. The mining and commercial interests of southern British Columbia have suffered through Parliamentary obstruction in the past, and it will be most unfortunate if eastern members do not give heed to the views and demands of the Associated Boards of Trade. The preamble of the resolution adopted sets forth that applications have been made for charters to build railways into the Province from the United States, and that interested parties are endeavoring to create the impression that such railways, if constructed, would be inimical to the mining and smelting interests of the Province. Against this it is declared that the Associated Boards of Trade of eastern British Columbia, "representing every town in the metalliferous por-

tion of eastern British Columbia and every enterprise whose success depends upon the development of its mineral resources, emphatically declare for 'free trade in railways,' and believe that every bona fide railway company desirous of building railways in the Province should be allowed to do so." In the preamble and resolution there is no spirit of compromise and no trace of an attempt to draft a series of clauses acceptable to contending elements. Every point is made clear and emphatic, and the great majority in favor of a liberal railway policy shows the position of those most deeply interested and most thoroughly informed on the questions at issue. Although railway competition may prove delusive the fact does not justify obstruction when men are willing to build needed lines without public aid. But whether we have competition or monopoly, the need will still exist for an efficient railway commission to regulate rates and adjust disputes between the railways and their patrons. That this is recognized by the Associated Boards of Trade is shown by the incorporation of a clause in the resolution in favor of the control of rates by a railway commission.

TORONTO WORLD.

Some short time ago the C. P. R. put up one John Houston to make the statement that it would be dangerous to allow United States railway men to get an entrance into British Columbia, because they would "squeeze Canada like a sponge." John's interview was intended solely for publication in the east. In British Columbia, where he is known, his dread of American competition is regarded as a joke, for he is the same John Houston who not long ago was fighting night and day for an American line into Nelson. The *Fernie Free Press* warns the people of Eastern Canada against the C. P. R.'s bogey man. "Were this same Houston," says the *Free Press*, "as well known in the east as he is here, there would be but little fear of his grossly misleading statements doing any harm, but the people in the east only know him as an ex-Mayor and an

M.L.A., and for this reason his statements, false though they be, may have some weight."

We are told that Houston supported the American line to Nelson on three grounds:
Mr. Houston's Former Views.

"1. That a railway to the south was necessary to free Kootenay from the monopolizing grip of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

"2. That it would give freer communication between Victoria and Vancouver and Kootenay.

"3. That anyone who wanted to build a railway in any direction should be allowed to do so free from legislative restriction which was always exercised in favor of the corporation with the 'pull' and against the interests of the people."

The reasons which Mr. Houston advanced a few years ago in regard to Nelson prove the case in favor of the proposed new line to Fernie. All talk of the smelters in British Columbia being compelled to shut down for want of coal and coke is utter nonsense, says our contemporary. "In less than two months the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company will be turning out over three thousand tons of coal per day—more than British Columbia will use for a long time to come, and within a few months more the output will be nearly ten thousand tons per day—provided a market can be had for it. If an outlet to the south is refused, it simply means that the coal industry in these parts will be crippled and the entire district suffer an irreparable loss."

BELLEVILLE INTELLIGENCER.

The Company aims high. In brief, the project is to increase the output of its coal mines from 1,000 tons to 6,000 tons per day, most of which will be converted into coke in the Company's own ovens at Fernie. If the Company obtains from the Dominion Parliament a charter for its projected railway lines, a large export market for coal or coke in the United States is expected, the market of British Columbia will be supplied, and it is believed that smelters for the reduction

of British Columbia ores, mixed with ores from the United States, can be profitably operated in the vicinity of the coal mines. These several enterprises will ensure a pay-roll of \$10,000 per day—say \$3,000,000 per year—which is a very substantial basis for the support of a large population, requiring to be fed and clothed and otherwise provided with the products of many varieties of Canadian industry. The possession of 20,000,000,000 tons of a superior quality of coal is a fine asset, particularly when located within reasonable distance of vast deposits of valuable minerals, and Canada is fortunate in having men of capital and enterprise like George A. Cox and Elias Rogers to take the lead in the development of such magnificent resources.

OTTAWA EVENING JOURNAL.

But what is the present condition of this coal country?

The present condition is that the coal is bottled up.

Development is dependent upon the existence of but one railway, and upon the will of that railway, namely, the Canadian Pacific. That railway is the sole outlet of the coal fields, and has the possibilities of the country absolutely in its power, and it fights desperately against any other railway getting in. Having a monopoly of the transportation of the coal which may be mined in that country, the C. P. R. can treat the coal fields as it desires. The C. P. R. can charge the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company whatever freight rates the C. P. R. pleases, can compel the coal company to sell to the C. P. R. coal and coke at whatever price the C. P. R. pleases, can compel the company to sell coal to anybody else at as high a rate as the C. P. R. pleases. And the C. P. R. has shown itself determined to force the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company to do business in the way the C. P. R. desires. But this is not the whole of the bottling-up. Even if on the best of terms with the C. P. R., any and every coal company which is or may be established in that country is compelled by present conditions to limit its sale to eastern British Columbia. The

coal can reach the larger market of the United States by only such roundabout routes that the freight charges become prohibitive. The eastern British Columbia market being limited, there is no inducement to the coal men to rapidly increase their output, and so the Province must fall short of a tremendous industry. What would be the condition to-day of Ottawa and the Ottawa valley if every stick of timber cut hereabouts had had to be transported away for sale over a single line of railway which could impose such freight charges as it pleased, and which declined to allow a plank to go the United States except around by way of Halifax? There would be no Ottawa; and and the Ottawa valley would be still a forest.

**The Railway
a Necessity.** The Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company asserts that it cannot hope for very rapid development if confined to its present market, and if continuing bottled up by the C. P. R. With a wider market, the coal company is prepared, it says, to spend close upon a million dollars at once to increase its plant and output. The effect, it is asserted, will be to create within five years, several large-sized towns in that district, sustained by a pay-roll which, the president asserts, will reach two or three million dollars a year. The company believes it can reach an output of 6,000 tons a day, which, if the coal is worth \$2.00 a ton at the mine, means \$12,000 a day or over three and a half million dollars a year. Such development and success also would lead beyond to other coal mining.

**No Bonus
Wanted.** And what is Canada asked to do to promote this large development? Is Canada asked for a huge bonus, such as railway schemes ask? No. Is Canada asked for large bounties, such as her iron works get? No. Is Canada asked for special export duties, such as nickel exploiters ask? No. Is a big land grant wanted? No. Does the coal company want the tariff on competitive goods increased, like our woollen and other manufacturers? No. The coal men want no pap of any kind. They want nothing except the right to spend a few hundred thousand dollars of their own money to build railways to get their coal out. That's all. They want no favors. They

want nothing except a charter. They want permission to spend their own money in Canada in order to bring American money into Canada, and incidentally to help develop the whole of eastern British Columbia.

And, ladies and gentleman, the coal company may not get that charter, that permission from our Parliament. The C. P. R. opposes it. The C. P. R. wants the coal kept bottled up, as a perpetual brew for its own consumption.

MONTREAL WITNESS.

Nor do the public interests seem in any way involved in maintaining the monopoly of the Canadian Pacific in the Crow's Nest Pass Railway transportation business. It is not clear to us that the smelting in Canada can be hindered by the supply of the smelters of the United States with coke, which must be hauled further, and must cost them more ultimately than the coke costs the Canadian smelters.

Exhaustless Stores.

Canadian geological reports are authority for the fact that there are 250,000 acres of coal lands, with seams aggregating 150 feet in thickness. The estimates of engineers place the quantity of coal within this area at twenty-five thousand millions of tons, which would admit of an output of five millions of tons annually for five thousand years. If, as Mr. Blakemore contends, the Canadian area is much larger than has been reported, then a larger output for a longer period could be calculated upon. If this is true, the deposit is practically inexhaustible. It seems to us that the more coal and coke we can supply to the United States the better it will be both for them and for ourselves. The more coal that is moved, the cheaper will be the cost of mining and transporting it. The resources of British Columbia are increased by the royalty paid upon the increased output, and the taxes of the people by so much lightened. Canadians complain that their exports to the United States do not increase rapidly

enough. This is unreasonable if we take every means possible to prevent our products from being exported there. Eastern Canada buys immense quantities of coal from the United States. Why should not Western Canada sell immense quantities of coal to the United States if it is in a position to do so? We should like to see Canadian resources developed by Canadian and British capital, but, in default of that, the Dominion would be wronging itself, as well as the world, by playing the dog in the manger with its natural resources.

QUEBEC CHRONICLE.

It is this proposition to connect the coal fields with the American smelters that is just now made a live question at Ottawa by the application for a railway charter to the boundary. The opponents of the project urge that the coal is required for the Canadian smelters and ought not to be taken abroad. To this President Cox replies that the company has 20,000,000 tons of coal in its mines, or enough to furnish 10,000 tons a day for 6,000 years. If Mr. Cox is right the objection must fall to the ground. It is hardly likely that Parliament will put an embargo on railway enterprise as a means of restricting exportation. If that must be done export duties can always be resorted to.

